Property-1932

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Call For Mr. Hall
Sales Dept.

NEGRO PROPERTY OWNER OLDEST CONTINUOUS DEPOSITOR ON BOOKS OF CITY NATIONAL BANK

E. J. Lavender, 70 years old Negro property owner of Selma, Ala. and for 27 years in the government's service with the Interna Revenue department, has the distinction of being the oldest continuous depositor in the City National Bank. 3-24-32

Lavender is an outstanding example of the successful handling through a bank of a small income, as he started his banking connections with the local institution when he was making $1.00 a day as a drayman for the wholesale grocery firm of C. W. Hooper and Co. back in 18[illegible]

He tells the story of loading a dray with meat one day, while Capt. W. P. Armstrong, father of the president of the City National and its head for many years, stood on the sidewalk talking.

"That's a fine, strapping fellow you've got working for you. He's big enough to throw a mule down" Capt. Armstrong laughing remarked.

Capt. Hooper agreed. The flashing smile of appreciation which Lavender sent their way must have made the two men feel more interested in him, for they made it possible for him to "bank" his savings of three dollars a week, until he had accumulated $100 when a pass book was issued him.

That was some 30 years ago.

In the meanwhile Lavender has raised a son and a daughter, educating them in northern and Canadian colleges, one for medicine and the other as a music teacher; he has accumulated property so that he owns today some 22 houses in the vicinity of Dallas, Pettus and Parkman avenue.

And during all of his long term of service in the revenue department, dating back to 1890 when he started as a customs inspector at Mobile, Lavender has done his banking through the City National Bank, sending his money back to Selma from New York, from Washington, from Wilmington or Philadelphia, with a spirit of loyalty which has aroused a well merited response from the bank's officials who have always found him business-like and agreeably in all transactions. During that period whatever government funds that he had to handle also were put through the local bank so that the agregate of his dealings with the bank in dollars and cents reaches into the thousands of dollars.

Property - 1932

CALIFORNIA MAN TAKES OWN LIFE; JEALOUSY MOTIVE

Robert Owens, Reputed to Be Wealthiest Man On Pacific Coast, Was Despondent Over Estrangement of Wife And Marriage of Daughter to White Youth—Couple Was Nationally Prominent In Social Circles.

By LAWRENCE F. LaMARR, Staff Correspondent

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Feb. 18—Mentally depressed over his tragic separation from his wife and the marriage of his beautiful daughter, Gladys, to a white youth against his wishes, Robert Owens, wealthy and prominent realtor—said to be the richest man on the Pacific Coast—shot and instantly killed Mrs. Owens, Garrie Garrison, the son-in-law, and fatally wounded himself.

The triple tragedy, which occurred Sunday evening, is one of the most grucsome ever enacted on the West Coast, where the Owens family are regarded as social leaders.

His daughter, Gladys, wife of the slain Garrison, barely escaped the fate of her mother and husband, when she dashed a glass of water in her father's face, causing him to lose aim long enough for her to flee to safety.

Owens was 75 years old and his wife 54. Since their separation, he had lived in one of his apartment houses at 1203 East 28th street.

The Owens family have long been in the public eye, and society circles received a violent shock in learning of the calamity. Their home was the scene of many important social events, and their elaborate entertaining was looked upon as the last word in society circles.

Brooded Over Marriage

Friends of the slayer declare that he was suffering from an acute attack of dementia, the result of his long brooding over the unfortunate separation from his wife, who had made her home with her daughter, Gladys, where the shooting occurred. It is rumored that the estrangement was brought on by another man coming between the couple. Mr. Owens was also greatly affected over the death two years ago of his favorite daughter, Manilla, nationally known Y. W. C. A. worker, and a graduate of Fisk University.

It was also explained by intimate friends of the family that Mr. Owens was displeased over the marriage of his daughter, Gladys, to the slain white husband.

Vacation In Orient

Mrs. Owens, as well as her daughter, were well known in society circles throughout the country. They were in the habit of spending their vacations in the Orient, and several years ago, enroute to Europe, they were honored guests of prominent families in many of the large cities of the East. The late A'Lelia Walker, upon that occasion, gave a mammoth party in their honor at Villa Lewaro.

Owned Vast Estate

Owens, for many years, controlled a vast estate, having inherited some most valuable business property in the heart of the city. He operated a hotel for many years and gained possession of considerable suburban properties that reaped for him huge returns.

He was highly respected and esteemed by the leading white citizens, and quite active in civic affairs and politics. He was a most generous character, when it came to charities and benevolent causes.

No announcement had been made at press time, with reference to the funeral arrangements. His daughter is prostrated over the tragedy.

Property-1932

General.

669,645 HOME OWNERS IN THE U.S.A.

Afro American

Census Reports 2,803,756 Families in 1930.

9-17-32

WASHINGTON — (CNS) — The Bureau of the Census has just announced the total number of families in the United States as 29,904,663 of which 2,803,756 are classified as Negro families. The tenure of homes was also included in the announcement.

Baltimore

In April, 1930, 89.3 per cent of the families in the United States were white, 9.4 per cent, Negro, and 1.3 per cent of other races. The distribution of families in the United States by color and nativity of head, together with the total population similarly classified is shown in the following tables:

All classes, 29,904,663 families, or 100.0 per cent; population, 122,775,046, or 100.0 per cent. White families, 26,765,294, or 89.3 per cent; population, 108,864,207, or 88.7 per cent. Native families, 20,968,803, or 70.1 per cent; population, 95,497,800, or 77.8 per cent. Native parentage, 15,507,993 families, or 51.9 per cent; population, 70,136,614 or 57.1 per cent. Foreign or mixed parentage, 5,460,810 families, or 18.3 per cent; population, 25,361,186, or 20.7 per cent. Foreign born, 5,736,491 families, or 19.2 per cent; population, 13,366,47, over 10.9 per cent. Negro families: 2,803,756, or 9.4 per cent; population, 11,891,143, or 9.7 per cent. Other races: 395,613 families, or 1.3 per cent; population, 2,019,696, or 1.6 per cent.

Of Negro homes, 669,645, or 23.9 per cent were owned; and 2,050,217 or 73.1 per cent were rented, while for 83,694 or approximately 3.0 per cent tenure was not reported.

For the white families, 49.5 per cent owned their homes, 48.7 per cent were tenants, and tenure was not reported on 1.8 per cent of these homes.

Chicago Negroes Own Most High-Priced Homes

(Exclusive Article)

9-29-32

Oklahoma City

WASHINGTON, Sept. 29. (ANP) — Excepting New York, Negro residents of Chicago own more high-priced homes than those of any other twelve cities in the United States, according to figures obtained in the 1930 population survey which have just been released by the census bureau.

Tht the claim to "those swell homes in Chicago' 'has some justification is seen in the fact that there is one home valued at $20,000 or more for each 1,000 Negroes in Chicago. In fact, there is approximately one and one-sixth such homes for each 1,000 colored residents.

The exact number of homes valued at $20,000 or more owned by Negroes in Chicago is 269. The Negro population of Chicago is 233,903.

The number for New York City with its Negro population of 327,000 is 228, or 41 less than for Chicago.

The number of homes of all types owned by Chicago Negroes is 5,765 and by New Yorkers, 4,278, fewer by 1,487 than those owned in Chicago.

In the cities with the principal Negro populations, the number of homes in the highest brackets; that is $20,00 0or more, is as follows:

Chicago	269
New York	228
Boston	8
Los Angeles	43
Pittsburgh	8
Phildelphia	35
Cleveland	10
St. Louis	25
Indianapolis	2
Detroit	33
New Orleans	13
Baltimore	2

Philadelphia leads in the middle bracket of homes valued at from $5,000 to $7,499. The figures for homes of this type are:

Chicago	1,682
New York	1,276
Boston	261
Los Angeles	1,290
Pittsburgh	649
Philadelphia	2,637
Cleveland	592
St. Louis	586
Detroit	1,347
Indianapolis	285
New Orleans	504
Baltimore	1,099

Philadelphia also leads in number and per capita, ownership of homes, the figures being:

Chicago, 233,903	5,765
New York, 327,706	4,278
Boston, 20,574	726
Los Angeles, 38,894	3,746
Pittsburgh, 54,983	2,121
Philadelphia, 219,599	7,829
Cleveland, 71,899	1,451
St. Louis, 93,580	2,198
Detroit, 120,066	3,841
Indianapolis 43,967	2,886
New Orleans, 129,632	4,563
Baltimore, 142,106	3,793

Property - 1932

General

$644,114,484 IN NEGRO HOMES, CENSUS SHOWS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Based on the median value of $1,341 non-farm homes owned by Negroes in the United States are worth $644,-114,484, figures compiled by the Bureau of the Census show.

This figure does not include the homes occupied by tenants but owned by Negroes. The total number of owned non-farm homes is placed at 480,324. Of this number, 188,795 homes are valued at under $1,000 each, and 1,289 at $20,000 or over. In percentages this means that 39.3 per cent of the homes are valued at less than $1,000 and 0.3 per cent are worth $20,000 or more.

1,290,697 Homes Rented

Non-farm homes rented by Negroes total 1,290,697, having a median rental of $13.04 per month. Homes renting for a price under $10 per month, total 479,539 or 27.2 per cent of the total number, while homes rented $200 per month and over total 147 or less than one-tenth of one per cent of the total.

Negro tenants then pay a monthly rent bill of $16,830,689 per month or $201,968,267 per year. Home ownership and value, tenancy and rental are revealed in the following tables:

TABLE NO. ONE—.. .. ..

Owned Non-Farm Homes by Value and by Color and Nativity of Head of Family, for the United States: 1930

Value	All classes	Negro
Total number	10,503,386	480,324
Value under $1,000	794,724	188,795
$1,000 to $1,499	570,047	66,516
$1,500 to $1,999	531,277	42,337
$2,000 to $2,999	1,167,325	59,404
$3,000 to $4,999	2,343,769	59,377
$5,000 to $7,499	2,297,029	31,839
$7,500 to $9,999	989,468	10,108
$10,000 to $14,999	906,557	6,676
15,000 to $19,999	339,535	1,897
$20,000 and over	354,337	1,289
Not reported	209,318	12,086
Per cent	100.0	100.0
Value under $1,000	7.6	39.3
$1,000 to $1,499	5.4	13.8
$1,500 to $1,499	5.1	8.8
$2,000 to $2,999	11.1	12.4
$3,000 to $4,999	22.3	12.4
$5,000 to $7,499	21.9	6.6
$7,500 to $9,999	9.4	2.1
$10,000 to $14,999	8.6	1.4
$15,000 to $19,999	3.2	0.4
$20,000 and over	3.4	0.3
Not reported	2.0	2.5
Median value	$4,778	$1,341

TABLE NO. TWO—.. .. ..

Rented Non-Farm Homes by Monthly Rental and by Color and Nativity of Head of Family, for the United States: 1930

Monthly Rental	All classes	Negro
Total number	12,351,549	1,290,697
Rented under $10	1,563,952	479,539
$10 to $14	1,330,927	241,898
$15 to $19	1,302,387	133,854
$20 to $29	2,545,208	188,079
$30 to $49	3,191,435	149,096
$50 to $74	1,503,401	49,353
$75 to $99	343,071	8,838
$100 to $149	163,292	1,949
$150 to $199	46,297	452
$200 and over	45,750	147
Not reported	315,829	37,402
Per cent	100.0	100.0
Rental under $10	12.7	37.2
$10 to $14	10.8	18.7
$15 to $19	10.5	10.4
$20 to $29	20.6	14.6
$30 to $49	25.8	11.6
$50 to $74	12.2	3.8
$75 to $99	2.8	0.7
$100 to $149	1.3	0.2
$150 to $199	0.4	(1)
$200 and over	0.4	(1)
Not reported	2.6	2.9
Median rental	$27.15	$13.04

(1)-Per cent not shown where less than [illegible] per cent.

OWNERS AND RENTERS.

When the fifteenth census was taken in 1930 the number of homes owned by Negroes in the United States was put at 669,645, while 2,050,217 families rented and the tenure of 83,894 families was unknown. With only 23.9 of families living in their own homes and 73.1 paying rent, business prospects for the real estate dealer ought to be good when better times return.

In New York State the Negro's monthly rent bill was $3,400,877, or $40,810,528 a year. A large proportion of this money was paid by residents of Manhattan and Brooklyn. Exclusive of farm property, the race pays taxes on 7,787 homes, situated largely in the five boroughs.

Statistics dealing solely with the Empire State impart the information that:

> **"Of the Negro homes owned, 296 were valued at over $20,000; 550 were valued at from $15,000 to $19,999; 1,175 were valued between $10,000 and $14,999; 1,179 were valued at between $7,500 and $9,999, while 2,036 were valued at between $5,000 and $7,499, and the remainder at less than $5,000."**

The slogan: "Own your own home" failed to impress many tenants paying high rents. The average rent paid was $39.69 monthly, but 333 families gave the landlord from $150 to $199 monthly and 80 families paid more than $200.

Unemployment and other factors growing out of the depression have materially reduced the Negro's rent bill in New York State since 1930. The increasingly large number of vacancies and rent reductions tell a most significant story. A display advertisement appearing in the last issue of The New York Age, telling the public that "Terry Holding Co. again reduces rents" accurately reflects acute economic conditions in Harlem for 1932.

Nail and Parker and other local real estate operators seem to be of the opinion that prosperity is just around the corner, for already they have launched sale campaigns with a view to interesting prospective purchasers in suburban property visualizing home life in peaceful, picturesque surroundings, far from the congested areas of the city.

Because of the "To Let" sign on so many apartments, the report has been circulated that many Negro families are leaving Harlem to settle in other sections of New York or in New Jersey. However, the majority of vacancies are not due to this cause but on account of families moving into smaller quarters, sometimes one room, it having been impossible for the breadwinner to get a job for months.

When there is a marked change for the better in business and the heads of families go back to work there will be less empty apartments. But it is predicted that the present rent prices will remain the same. No more post-war levels.

Property-1932

MAID WHO INHERITED A MILLION PUTS MONEY IN CHICAGO BANKS

Journal and Guide
Norfolk, Va

IS REWARDED FOR SERVICE BY TEXAN

1-30-32
Norfolk, Va

White Woman's Estate Left To Maid And Companion

MOST OF IT IN CASH

Mrs. Ernestine Wesley Brooks Of Chicago Is Lucky One

CHICAGO — (ANP—A one-million dollar reward for loyalty and intelligence was the good fortune of Mrs. Ernestine Wesley Brooks, 4939 Washington Park Court, this city, last week when legal matters in respect to a bequest of more than one million dollars made her, were cleared up.

Mrs. Brooks states that the amount of her bequest is in excess of $1,100,000 in cash and real estate. Most of this sum is in cash, checks for the cash having been delivered to her.

The bequest to the 27-year-old Chicago matron was made in the will of Mrs. E. V. Grosso, wealthy white woman of Beaumont, Texas, who died in Houston, Texas, in 1928.

Mrs. Brooks had served intermittently as maid and companion for the white woman for nine years prior to her death. Mrs. Grosso stated in her will that she was rewarding Mrs. Brooks for her loyalty and her intelligence.

Recounting some of her experiences with Mrs. Grosso, Mrs. Brooks stated in an interview Friday: "Mrs. Grosso used to tell me that she was going to do something for me, but I never had any idea that she would leave practically her entire fortune to me. She was very kind to me while she lived."

Had To Leave School

Mrs. Brooks went into the employ of Mrs. Grosso when she was fifteen years old. She had just finished high school in Beaumont and intended to pursue studies at college, but decided that in order to have sufficient money, she would go to work for a while.

She planned to go to Houston and before leaving went to a Beaumont store to purchase shoes. A white woman spoke to Mrs. Brooks and asked her how she would like to work for her. The young high school graduate immediately asked the white woman how much she would pay her. She was promised nine dollars a week and accepted.

She later learned of a place where she could make ten dollars, however, and decided to leave her first place. Her first employer raised her salary.

The first employer was Mrs. Grosso.

Maid, Then Companion

For the next nine years, Mrs. Brooks served from time to time in Mrs. Grosso's employ. At first she was employed as a maid, but after an estrangement occurred between Mrs. Grosso and her husband in Beaumont, the white woman went to Houston to live and Mrs. Brooks became her companion. Most of the time Mrs. Grosso was in Houston, she occupied a hotel apartment. Mrs. Brooks accompanied her on many of her out-of-town trips and when Mrs. Grosso went to Paris, Mrs. Brooks went with her.

Three trips abroad were made by Mrs. Grosso after Mrs. Brooks went into her employ. On the first trip Mrs. Brooks accompanied her, but on the second trip, Mrs. Brooks having married, it was necessary for her to remain at home to care for her child. On the third trip, Mrs. Grosso wrote her will, bequeathing her estate to her companion.

Will Contested

On the day before she died, while in a Houston hospital, Mrs. Grosso made available to Mrs. Brooks a large sum of money and informed her of the whereabouts of many of her valuables.

After Mrs. Grosso's death, a spirited contest against probate of the will was put up by Mrs. R. L. Pettigo, white, of Houston. Mrs. Pettigo contened that Mrs. Grosso had been an adopted daughter in her parents' family and that she was entitled to a share of the estate.

When the court denied her claim, trumped up charges that Mrs. Brooks had made away with some of the property of Mrs. Grosso were made. A move to arrest Mrs. Brooks was made. But backed by powerful white friends, Mrs. Brooks met this chailenge and defeated this claim.

In the various contests, Mrs. Brooks was represented by P. Harvey, a white attorney of Houston.

However, Mrs. Brooks gives much credit for her success in winning her bequest to the interest of white friends of Mrs. Grosso who understood the high regard which her former employer had for her. These friends were largely instrumental in having some items of the estate, such as real estate, stocks and bonds, converted into cash and placed at the disposal of Mrs. Brooks.

One of the items converted was a large interest in the States Hotel in New York.

Mrs. Brooks and her husband, a former Texas business man, are to make Chicago their future home.

ADMITS YARN FALSE AFTER QUESTIONING

Journal and Guide

Chicago Banks Deny She Had Deposited Money There

2-27-32

FORGERY IS CHARGED

Norfolk, Va.

Mrs. Ernestine Wesley Brooks, "Heiress," Borrows $75

CHICAGO.—(ANP)—Mrs. Ernestine Wesley Brooks, the "faithful companion-maid" who four weeks ago startled friends in this city with the announcement that she had come into possession of more than a million dollars through the will of a former white woman employer and friend who had died in Houston, Texas, in 1928, completely reversed herself last Thursday evening, when confronted with a mass of challenging testimony, and confessed that her original story was untrue.

Mrs. Brooks had stated that some years ago she was employed by a Mrs. E. V. Grosso, white, in Beaumont, Texas; that Mrs. Grosso had accepted her as a friend; that she had traveled throughout the United States and abroad with Mrs. Grosso; and that she had been one of the last persons with Mrs. Grosso before she died in a Houston hospital.

On the day before Mrs. Grosso died, Mrs. Brooks (who admits that she is not known by that name in Houston) stated that the white woman had authorized her to draw $6,000 from a Houston bank. She had done so and had purchased twenty-eight dollars worth of merchandise for the sick woman. The rest of the money was kept by Mrs. Brooks and used to defray funeral expenses, according to her story.

When Mrs. Grosso became aware of her approaching death, Mrs. Brooks declared that she called her, gave her the will; and also informed her as to where many of her hidden valuables were.

The Elusive Will

The reputed will is at the bottom of the entire amazing story. P. Harvey, a white lawyer in Houston, admitted that Mrs. Brooks had approached him with some purported legal papers, but insisted that these papers had no value. Mrs. Brooks asserts that she paid Harvey $25 for his opinion.

This much of her story is substantially corroborated by an investigation made by The Houston Informer which first challenged Mrs. Brooks' statements and by a long-distance telephone conversation conducted with Mrs. Harvey by Assistant State's Attorney Euclid Taylor from Chicago Wednesday night of last week.

Mrs. Brooks is alleged to have come to Chicago with the so-called will in her possession, although reports as to whether anybody has seen the will are conflicting. At any rate, the story of her inheritance was born and grew rapidly under the nourishment given to it by Mrs. Brooks herself.

Talked of Wealth

She talked casually in large figures,, mentioning issues of stocks and bonds in which she was interested in describing real estate holdings in Texas and New York, and held preliminary conversations with the purchase of local real estate in mind. It is reported that she had discussed with N. K. McGill and Sons the availability of a residence at 48th street and South Parkway.

Journal and Guide

At one time, according to Garland Jackson, the half brother of her husband, she stated that her fortune would amount to $1,000,000. None of this huge sum of money was available to her when she arrived in this city early in December, but she insisted that she would soon be able to use it.

2-27-32

Jackson became her financial advisor. He states that although she received small sums from Houston, he bore most of her personal expenses, room rent, board, entertainment and medical supplies. He also gave up his job in order to devote more of his time to the interests of Mrs. Brooks.

Norfolk, Va.

Early Investigations

It was not until January that the newspapers got wind of the story. The Associated Negro Press made the first visit to the home where Mrs. Brooks is a roomer at 4939 Washington Park Court. Mrs. Brooks blandly admitted that the story of her wealth was true, but was dissuaded from discussing the details of how she came into it by Jackson. She stated at that time (early in

"I must confess that my life seems to be becoming a series of shocks and sudden surprises," asserted Mrs. Brooks when approached by an Associated Negro Press reporter who bore the Informer report.

"I was suddenly surprised when I learned that Mrs. Grosso had left me her fortune and could scarcely believe that it was true myself until I entered into the litigation over it. Now I am shocked that a newspaper in the city where I lived and worked for several years should seek to question my story and to brand me as a fake."

After making the preceding statement, Mrs. Brooks referred The Associated Negro Press to her attorney, Euclid Taylor. Mr. Taylor is an assistant state's attorney of Cook County and vice-president of the National Bar Association. He sent the following statement to The Associated Negro Press.

"My attention has been directed to an article appearing in last week's issue of the Houston Informer in which Mrs. Ernestine Brooks, a former resident of Houston, Texas, is referred to as a fake heiress because 'a reporter for the Informer was unable to find the record of Mrs. Grosso's (Mrs. Brook's benefactress) will having been probated there."

"It is not my intention nor that of Mrs. Brooks to engage in any controversy with the Informer or with any other newspaper. However, knowing as I do the reputation of The Associated Negro Press for the veracity of the article contained in its releases, I want to publicly state that Mrs. Brooks is not a fake, but is a real, live American girl with a fortune of more than a million dollars in two Chicago banks— the Continental Illinois Bank and Trust Company and the First National Bank."

Journal and Guide
Norfolk, Va

2-13-32

Mrs. Brooks repeated her story because she was shown a report in The Houston Informer to the effect that what she had stated was a "yarn" and a fake.

January) that the matter was still in litigation and that publication would injure her chances of securing all the money due her. She asked the Associated Negro Press not to release the story until January 20 when she would return from a trip to Houston.

When she returned to Chicago, she visited the Associated Negro Press offices, in keeping with her promise, to agree to the release of the story. But the Associated Negro Press declined at that time to handle the story without more details. From the offices of the Associated Negro Press, Jackson went to a local newspaper and gave one of its reporters the story. It was published. The following day the Associated Negro Press released an extra on the story, sticking to such facts as it believed could be depended upon and to the facts given to the newspaper by Jackson.

Denials Pour In

The following week vehement denials came from Houston, published in the Informer. Mrs. Brooks' story was described as a yarn and a hoax. She was immediately interviewed and expressed mild indignation.

She stuck steadfastly to her original story and referred the Associated Negro Press to her attorney, whom she had retained on January 25 as a legal advisor at a $5,000 yearly fee. The attorney was Euclid Lewis Taylor, vice president of the National Bar Association and assistant state's attorney of Cook county. Mr. Taylor was interviewed. He stated emphatically:

"She has got the money!"

Further he issued and signed a statement in which he asserted that Mrs. Brooks had more than a million dollars on deposit in the Continental Illinois Bank and Trust Company and the First National Bank both in this city.

Visits Banks

Frequent trips were made by Mrs. Brooks to these banks. At the Continental, she talked with two of the vice presidents. She was accompanied by Jackson, the half-brother of her husband. At the First National, also accompanied by Jackson, she went into the vault containing the safety deposit vaults and is reported to have discussed her business with one of the vice presidents there.

At neither bank did she permit Jackson to discover the nature of her business. She stated that she had $18,000 worth of jewels, considerable money, and important papers in the safety deposit boxes, but no one ever saw any of these things.

Jackson and Taylor both claimed to have seen pass books from these banks containing large cash entries. Mrs. Brooks stated that a photostatic copy had been made of one of her large checks, but she never busied herself to produce the copy which she claimed was at the bank.

Becomes Suspicious

Jackson suddenly became suspicious. He had given up his job and used most of his money supporting Mrs. Brooks, according to his statement, and was eager to be repaid. He states that he looked at the pass books and noticed that ciphers had been added to the sums originally entered.

He called this discrepancy to the attention of Mrs. Brooks, who, according to him, was visibly moved, but stuck to her story. When the confidence of both Taylor and Jackson was shaken, the Associated Negro Press immediately instituted a searching inquiry.

At the Continental Bank, it was explained by the vice president that Mrs. Brooks had visited the institution and talked of soliciting their aid in the collection of some jewels, but her story had sounder queer and the bank had remained uninterested. He stated that Mrs. Brooks did not have a cent in that bank.

Officials at the First National Bank also discounted the story told by Mrs. Brooks, but declined to state specifically whether she did or did not have anything on deposit there.

"Heiress" Borrows $75

In the meantime, Mrs. Brooks had contracted a small loan, in addition to the money which Jackson claims to have advanced her. Before she made her trip to Houston in January, she borrowed $75 from Arthur Wilson, cashier of the Douglass National Bank. She repaid that and the next day sought a larger loan. Wilson declined to increase the amount, but did lend her $75 again. That has not been paid.

Jackson and friends who live in the home with Mrs. Brooks state that when he insisted that the pass book entries were forgeries Mrs. Brooks became so upset that it was necessary to send her to Provident Hospital. Dr. C. Leon Wilson, attending her, insisted that she had influenza. After several days spent in a private room at the hospital, which has not been paid for, Mrs. Brooks was returned to her home. A reporter for the Associated Negro Press interviewed her for two hours while she lay in her sick bed Thursday night.

Dramatic Interview

The situation surrounding the interview was dramatic. Mrs. Brooks lay abed in a room in the middle of the apartment. In the adjoining room was the landlady who claimed that Mrs. Brooks' payments for board and room were four weeks in arrears; there was Jackson, out of a job, out of his money, and feeling responsible for his half-brother's wife; there was Taylor, the assistant state's attorney, with his professional reputation hanging on the story of the sick woman; there was the secretary of the cashier of the Douglass Bank who had interceded for the loans; and there were two other women, both of whom had lent the sick woman money.

The interview between the reporter for the Associated Negro Press and Mrs. Brooks consumed two hours. During all that time they were quite alone and the men and women in the other room anxiously awaited a statement.

Mrs. Brooks stuck steadfastly to her story throughout the interview. At times, she was pleasant, at other times petulant, defiant and saucy. Her slender fingers twitched nervously. She was reminded of discrepancies in her various stories. She cleverly destroying them.

She was told that there was a mass of evidence to indicate that her story was untrue. She did not budge, except to state that if the newspapers wished to say the story was false, she did not care. At one time, she promised to go to the bank and show the reporter convincing proof, two days later. In the meantime, Jackson had arranged for her to go to Houston the next day.

Jackson was called in. He insisted that she go to the bank the next morning and prove that she had the money. She declined

She denied that she had received any money from anybody but Wilson, the bank cashier, and stated that she had paid him all she owed him.

Plead For Truth

Taylor, her attorney, was called in. He and the Associated Negro Press reporter pleaded with her for the truth. She declined to change her story, although she indicated that there were some things she would tell Taylor that she would not reveal to the reporter. The reporter left the room.

Taylor talked to her for an hour. When he finished and came into the other room to the waiting group, he announced that Mrs. Brooks had confessed that her story was false. She blamed Jackson for her position. She declared, so Taylor stated, that she had come to Chicago with what she thought was a will, the same document she had taken to Harvey, the Houston lawyer. She thought that Harvey, because of southern prejudice, had turned her away, and expected to obtain fairer treatment in the North.

The Doubtful Document

Shortly after she reached this city, she let Jackson in on the secret of the document and he, according to her, told others. She states that at the time she did not know whether the document was good or bad, or what to do about the report that had got out. She did not know it was going to reach the newspapers.

She claims that she did not think it would hurt to let Jackson and others believe anything they wanted to while she was having the document examined and, if it proved not to be what she expected, she would go back to Houston and nobody would be harmed. But the story grew and grew and she did not know how to stop it. Then she began to fill it out and give it credibility.

Lawyer's Statement

After the confession which Mr. Taylor reported from Mrs. Brooks, Mr. Taylor issued the following signed statement to the Associated Negro Press:

"Mrs. Brooks approached me in January to discuss with me my retention as her legal adviser. On the 25th of January a contract to that effect was drawn up. This contract was drawn up by me, but was not signed by Mrs. Brooks until several days ago.

"In the meantime Mrs. Brooks showed me the pass books on the Continental Illinois Bank and Trust Company and the First National Bank of Chicago, containing deposits entries totaling $1,110,000.

Used Detectives

"I did not question the entries in these pass books until Mrs. Brooks' story of her inheritance was challenged by newspapers in her home town. I then questioned her and employed private investigators to seek the truth. I also communicated with her alleged attorney in Houston, Texas. I was informed by his wife that he did not represent Mrs. Brooks and that her story as it involved him was untrue in every detail.

Claims Forgeries

"My investigators reported to me that the entries in the pass books of the Chicago banks were forgeries."

After receiving this statement from Mr. Taylor, the Associated Negro Press, through one of its representatives, questioned Mrs. Brooks as to why she had forged these entries. She denied that she had forged any entries, and also that Jackson or Taylor had ever seen any pass books belonging to her.

Property—1932.

Former Houston Woman Not Left Vast Fortune By A Wealthy White Texan

By JAMES M. BURR

According to an Associated Negro Press report of Jan. 27, a Mrs. Ernestine Wesley Brooks, formerly of Texas (Beaumont and Houston), but now living in Chicago, is reported to have become in possession of more than a million dollars left her by an alleged companion, Mrs. E. V. Grosso, wealthy white woman of Beaumont. The donor is said to have died in Houston in 1928, and according to the report, Mrs. Grosso's will recited that she (Mrs. Grosso) was rewarding Mrs. Brooks for her loyalty to her as maid and personal companion.

Mrs. Brooks, as the story goes, in recounting some of her experiences with her former employee, states that Mrs. Grosso often said that "she was going to do something for me, but I never had any idea that she was going to leave me her fortune. She was very kind to me while she lived."

Works for Mrs. Grosso Long Time.

As the report goes, Mrs. Brooks is said to have gone to work for Mrs. Grosso when she was quite a girl, just out of high school in Beaumont, and intended to go to college, but being a poor girl decided to work a while, then go to college. During the interval she decided to come to Houston, which offered better possibilities for work and while she was contemplating the trip she went to a store in Beaumont to make ready for the trip to Houston. While at the store she was accosted by an unknown white woman, who later was known to her as Mrs. Grosso.

An Estrangement Between Mrs. Grosso and Husband.

Because of an estrangement between Mrs. Grosso and her husband, according to the report, Mrs. Brooks was taken into the confidence of Mrs. Grosso and was promoted from maid to that of personal companion. Many trips abroad are said to have been made by these two companions. On the occasion of one of these trips, it is said that Mrs. Grosso wrote her will bequeathing to Mrs. Brooks this vast fortune and apprised Mrs. Brooks of the whereabouts of all of her valuables.

Houston Attorney Named by Mrs. Brooks.

Working upon one statement of the report, The Informer began an investigation and when interviewed by an Informer reporter, the attorney named (Attorney P. Harvey), who has his office in the Republic Building, faintly remembered that there was such a person as Ernestine Brooks. Sad to say, however, he remembered some other things, after his memory was refreshed, by questions from the reporter. He remembered that the woman came to him with a batch of papers and made statements to him regarding the matter, which upon investigation by him, proved absolutely without grounds. He remembered names of certain persons whom she gave him who did not exist. He remembered how he went, in good faith, to the records of the probate court and found that there was no such will on file and that there had been no will made by any such person.

In the report of Mrs. Brook's story she stated that some charges were "trumped up" on her. We found that the charges were not preferred but that an Italian, who has a store in Houston now, had been "gipped" with one of the "hot checks" and that he threatened criminal action. The story goes that Attorney Harvey represented Mrs. Brooks in a contest which was lodged against the reputed will and in other various contests which she encountered. This, Attorney Harvey emphatically denies.

The Informer's investigation has not found out who the husband of Mrs. Brooks is, whom she claims was a former "Houston business man." We will state, however, that a casual search among the business men in Houston does not disclose who this business man could be.

MRS. BANKS GETS ESTATE OF RICH WHITE HUSBAND

Court Overrules Her In-Laws; Mate Defied Traditions

CHICAGO—(ANP) — Through a recent court action, Mrs. Dolly Gardener Banks has been awarded what remains of the once million-dollar estate of her white husband, James Banks, ex-Georgian, who moved to Chicago and married Mrs. Banks in 1927, after a romance which had lasted more than forty years.

Mr. Banks died a year ago in the home which he had maintained for Mrs. Banks at 4814 South Parkway.

At one time, he was the owner of valuable real estate and securities in several southern states, but it is known that during his last years, much of his estate was dissipated and renounced. He was 80 years old at the time of his death.

Banks was the son of a Connecticutt shoemaker who had gone to Georgia prior to the Civil War and established himself. During the Civil war he made shoes for the Confederate army, accepted the Confederate script, and invested it in real estate. At the conclusion of the war, he found himself wealthy.

Fell In Love In Youth

James Banks was educated at Yale. Dolly Stroud, whose mother worked for the Banks' family, was born on the Banks' place. When she was a young girl and James Banks had won his honors at Yale, the two fell in love with each other. Georgia law and custom prevented their romance from developing along normal lines and, although their affection for each other was undying, they were compelled to live under a cloud in the southern states for a period of forty years.

During part of this time, the woman who was denied her love, sought to destroy the attachement between herself and the white man by marrying a man of her own race, but the black-and-white romance was too strong and, after she had fled to a northern state, her southern white lover pursued her and brought her back.

She was divorced from Gardener and went to live with Banks who built her a lavish home in the most fashionable section of Atlanta.

Banks' real estate in Atlanta was once appraised at more than a million dollars.

During his younger years, he practised law and was once the secretary of the late Senator Hill of Georgia.

His relatives, after he came to Chicago, started a court battle to prevent him from giving his property to Mrs. Gardener, who had become Mrs. Banks. This action held is said to be a generous one.

The three suits which have been entered by the white wife have been expensive also and the property settlement causes a valuable piece of real estate to be tied up to guarantee her an income of $300 a month.

The attorneys' fees have been staggering and it is reported that a final decree from his colored wife cost him $500. This was in addition to regular divorce attornevs' fees.

Million Dollar Estate Dwindles To $800

Journal and Guide

CHICAGO—(ANP)—It was disclosed that the estate of James Banks, once wealthy Georgian, which was one time said to have been worth more than one million dollars, has dwindled to an approximate sum of $800, mostly represented by notes, when Banks' relatives relinquished their right for it, and the court awarded what was left to Mrs. Dolly Gardner Banks, the widow.

Norfolk Va 12-24-32

Large sums are known to have been lost by Banks in Chicago real estate investments. It is reported that a considerable investment was made in a $90,000 building here, but due to demands from other directions, the notes on this building could not be met and the investment was lost.

Other investments in Florida and Georgia real estate and businesses were wiped away by the depression. Shortly after Mr. Banks' death, his widow put up for sale considerable of the furniture which had been left in the home, in order to retain ready cash.

Property -1932

CHURCH UNITS NAMED IN WILL OF MRS. HANDY

Afro-American 7-2 32

Old Folks Home and Missionary Society Get Bequests.

Baltimore Md.

ESTATE HELD IN TRUST 5 YEARS

Daughter Named Executrix for Perioc

The Old Folks' Home of the A.M.E. Church and the Wom n's Mite Missionary Society, of which she was a leading figure, were both remembered in the will of the late Mrs. Mary Handy.

Mrs. Handy, widow of the late Bishop John Handy, was superintendent of the Old Folks' Home for a number of years up until the time of her death on June 10. She was also one of the founders of the missionary society.

An aggregate total of $1,250 was bequeather by Mrs. Handy to nine relatives and friends and the two named agencies of the A.M.E Church, to which organizations she left $100 each. Others who received gifts were three sisters, Mesdames Ella Stratton, Lavenie Ennis and Janie Thomas, and a niece, Mrs Hilda Green.

Held in Trust

Walter Beckett and Handy Beckett, sons of the late Rev. John W Beckett, and the first prominent undertaker of Philadelphia, were named to receive $100 each. The daughter of another minister, Miss Juanita Shannon, of Chicago, was left $100. Mrs. Handy bequeathed to her god-children, Grace Skinner and Annetta Perine, $50 each.

All the rest of Mrs. Handy's estate, which is believed to be estimated at about $4,000, was ordered left to her grand-daughter, Mrs. Lillian Trusty, 1357 N. Calhoun Street, whom she also named as executrix.

Mrs. Handy, it was learned, was left a considerable estate by the late Bishop Handy, but it is said to have dwindled as a result of real estate operations in which others were connected.

Included in the will of Mrs. Handy was a wish that she have a plain funeral and that a suitable marker be erected at her grave. The will was drawn September 29, 1930

Property—1932

NEGRO OIL-GAS COMPANY 'HITS' 2 MORE WELLS

Pioneer Company and the men behind it represent 6 big gas wells and they are now getting ready to drill another well

By B. T. THORNTON

Jackson. Miss.—The Pioneer Oil and Gas Company of this city has just brought in two more big natural gas wells known as the Moter No. 1, and Green No. 1. The remarkable growth and development of this company has been nothing short of marvelous.

Beginning only about a year and 4 months ago with practically nothing but hope and anticipation, this company now ranks as the third largest producer of natural gas in the Jackson field, though there are some 30 odd companies operating in this field.

The Pioneer Oil and Gas Company has a daily open flow capacity of enough gas to supply the average domestic needs of a city of a million population. The Pioneer Oil and Gas Company is doubtless the biggest Negro producer of natural gas in the world.

The natural gas industry is rapidly becoming one of the major industries of the nation. The natural gas industry of this country represents an investment of between $3,000,000 and $4,000,000. The natural gas business of this country drew a gross income in 1930 of $415,0000,000 and the gas industry is one of the very, very few businesses of the country that has steadily increased during the depression.

The organization of the Pioneer Oil and Gas Company is the work of that indomitable genius, S. D. Redmond, its president, founder and chief counsel. This company has quite an illustrious board of directors who are as follows: S. D. Redmond, A. M. Redmond, druggist and realtor; M. C. Collins, Mississippi's leading mortician; Dr. C. B. Christian, S. R. Redmond, attorney of St. Louis, vice president; Dr. F. E. Pinson, Vicksburg; Dr. L. A. Smith, Dr. C. L Barnes, W. L. Mhoon, attorney; C. C. DeJoie, president of Unity Life Insurance Company, New Orleans, La.; T. J. Huddleston, fraternal insurance, vice president; Dr. L. T. Miller, Yazoo City, one of the leading surgeons of the South, having a hospital of 50 beds in the sleepy little city of Yazoo, where he often times preforms a dozen or more major operations daily.

The Pioneer Company paid a cash dividend in November and a stock dividend will be paid on March 1. The

WHO PAYS THE TAXES?

A United Press dispatch of December 11th from Jackson, Miss. in discussing the Mississippi sales tax, includes the following paragraph:

> "The sales tax has so extended the base of the burden of taxes that for the first time in the history of Mississippi, the negro, who comprises 51 per cent of the population, actually contributes money to the government."

Think of it! "For the first time" the Negroes of Mississippi upon whose backs the work of that slave ridden state has fallen since the state became a state, are "actually" paying some of the taxes! It would be to laugh, if this view was not so general. So many people really believe the above paragraph, as sent out by the United Press, actually speaks the truth. A more glaring falsehood could not be written.

Labor pays all of the taxes in the last analysis, because everything that is the subject of taxation is produced by labor. Before the sales tax in Mississippi, the burden of taxation fell upon the big plantations. But these plantations were able to pay taxes only because of the labor of this black 51 per cent of the state's population, which the United Press says now for the first time is contributing money to the government. This is proven by the fact that, when Negroes left many of these plantations for Northern points during the Negro migrations, the owners were unable to pay any taxes because there were no Negroes to grow and harvest the cotton, out of the proceeds of which the plantation owners could pay their land taxes. The result was that the State of Mississippi had on its hands a lot of barren land, with which it could not pay its debts, and a search was made for new sources of taxation. The sales tax was adopted.

The only difference between the taxes that Negroes of Mississippi paid before the sales tax and the taxes which they pay under the sales tax is that now they are paid directly; whereas formerly they were paid to the plantation owner and other employers in labor, who in turn paid them to the state. But it is not true that Negroes now for the first time are contributing money to the government of Mississippi.

Missouri.

Property - 1932

MISSOURI K. OF P.'S PURCHASE POTATO KING'S FARM

Modern Farm

The farm at Edwardsville, Kansas, owned at one time by Junius J. Groves, colored, known throughout the country as the "potato king", is now the property of the Missouri Grand Lodge of Knights of Pythias. The last payments were made this year and the Lodge now has a clear title. 9-15-32

This is a 310 acre farm in the rich Kaw valley of Kansas. At one time it was rated as the most valuable farm of its size in the state. A 22 room mansion is located on it which was once the show place of Wyandotte County. Mr. Groves died several years ago. He was a close friend of Booker T. Washington.

Negro Press Chicago

Property—1932

NEGRO FARMER REFUSES TO SELL 40-ACRE TRACT TO LINDY

By ORRIN EVANS

(Photo on Page 10-B)

HOPEWELL, N. J.—Practically penniless, climbing that last steep grade in the later years of one's life which leads to eternal sleep and surcease from labor, sheltered by the well-circumstanced folk for whom he performs daily chores about the house, William Trueheart, 87 years old, native of the Sourlands, snubbed an offer of (he exhibited the offer made through much correspondence, but demanded a pledge that the sum be kept secret) a staggering sum for a man unaccustomed to thinking of money exceeding four figures, made by Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh for the purchase of his 40-acre farm adjoining the Lindbergh estate.

The offer was made to Trueheart slightly over a year ago by emissaries of Lindbergh. Turning a deaf ear on the first offer, the proffer was raised and raised until it reached a sum far in excess of any sum Trueheart had ever dreamed of having in his possession.

Refuses To Sell

"But no one could buy that plot of ground from me for all the money in the world," Trueheart told the writer last Saturday. A far away look, a gentle sigh—gentle as the soft wind that swept across the shaded eminence where he had just posed for the Independent cameraman last Saturday afternoon—a quick shrug of his shoulders, and, "You know that has been the family homestead for 106 years. I was born and raised right there, and there's nobody who could buy that ground from me." he continued.

"Do you think that Colonel Lindbergh was actuated in offering to purchase the ground because he didn't want a Negro neighbor as close as that to his estate?" Trueheart was asked.

"I don't think so. I never saw Colonel Lindbergh, but from what others tell me about him, he doesn't seem to have any color prejudice. I reckon he just wanted more land, that's all," Trueheart replied.

"I'm so old now that I wouldn't know what to do with so much money, anyhow" he concluded.

Property—1932

VILLA LEWARO WORTH $500,000, BRINGS $47,000

NEW YORK—The Villa Lewaro, the late Madame Walker's summer home on the Hudson was sold to an unnamed party at $47,000, according to announcement made from Indianapolis, this week.

The Villa Lewaro was erected and furnished at a cost of $400,000, and the cost of the ground brought the total up to a half million dollars.

The villa has columns, balconies, trellises, porches and cupolas. It faces Broadway and is approached by a drive built by Madame Walker at a cost of $25,000.

Behind it facing the Hudson is a sunken garden, a terrace garage and a six-room apartment for servants; a fountain, a small gymnasium and outdoor swimming pool. The Albany boat plying the Hudson played its starchlights upon it and the community of West Chester regarded it as its most famous sight.

Was Laundress

The first Madame Walker, who built up her concern from a capital of $1.25, started as a laundress and was considered the richest colored woman in America before her death eleven years ago.

Her daughter, the much-married A'Lelia Walker, inherited her mother's fortune. The status of her financial affairs were not disclosed at the time her own death last August, although many were apprehensive of her condition due to her efforts to dispose of the villa. The daughter was a lavish spender and her home was a rendezvous for Harlem's elite.

Mme. Walker's Estate Nets Only $47,000

NEW YORK CITY, Feb. 24.—The late Madame Walker's summer home, Villa Lewaro on the Hudson, was sold to an unnamed party for $47,000, according to an announcement made from Indianapolis.

The Villa Lewaro was erected and furnished at a cost of $400,000, and the cost of the grounds brought the total up to a half million dollars. It was named by Enrico Caruso in honor of Mme. Walker's daughter, Lelia Walker Robinson.

The villa has columns, balconies, trellises, porches and cupolas. It faces Broadway and is approached by a drive built by Madame Walker at a cost of $25,000.

Behind it, facing the Hudson, is a sunken garden, a terrace garage and a six-room apartment for servants; a fountain, a small gymnasium and outdoor swimming pool. The Albany boat plying the Hudson played its searchlights upon it and the community of West Chester regarded it as its most famous sight.

The first Madame Walker, who built up her concern from a capital of $1.25, started as a laundress and was considered the richest colored woman in America before her death 11 years ago.

NEW YORK TIMES

APR 2 1932

VILLA LEWARO CONTESTED.

Negro Group Claims Ownership of Home of Late Mme. Walker.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., April 1.—The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People moved today to be joined as a defendant in an action brought in Supreme Court here on the ground that Villa Lewaro, the $250,000 Irvington estate of the late Mme. C. J. Walker, now rightly belonged to the association.

The action was brought by Louis Isquith, New York real estate man, against Frank B. Ransom, Frank E. De Franz and Robert L. Brokenburr, trustees of the estate. Isquith seeks to compel the trustees to fulfill a contract which he alleges they entered into with him last August to sell the property for $60,000.

Villa Lewaro, the Mme. C. J. Walker Half-Million Dollar Mansion at Irvington-on-Hudson, Sold at Last

Palatial and Noted Home Passes Away From Race, Being Bought by White Fraternal Organization for a Retreat for Women

After many months of surmise and circulating of baseless rumors, it has at last been definitely announced that the magnificent marble palace, Villa Lewaro, erected at Irvington-on-Hudson by the late Mme. C. J. Walker, founder of the Mme. C. J. Walker Manufacturing Co., Indianapolis, Ind., and which represented an investment of at least a half million dollars, has been sold.

Although it was hoped that some means might be found by which the palatial home, with its attractive surroundings, could be preserved as a cultural shrine or art colony for the race, it was not possible to secure the funds necessary, and so a white organization, the Companions of the Forest of America, a national nonsectrian organization, has taken title to the property, and will turn it into a haven for "tired mothers and their dependents."

To Be "Haven for Women"

This announcement was made Thursday, February 25, and the report was confirmed by Mrs. Annie Poth, secretary, in charge of the organization in this district, with offices at 271 West 125th street. She said alterations will be made with a view to opening the retreat for members about June 1. Quarters will be provided for as many women as possible for a month at a time, and bungalows will be constructed for housing of individual families.

It will be operated the year round. The organization has about 425,000 members, nearly half of whom are in the metropolitan district.

The Villa Lewaro was built thirteen years ago by Mme. Walker, with Vertner W. Tandy, colored architect of New York City, in charge of construction. $400,000 was spent for the building and grounds. The house has twenty-four rooms, and it is situated on a plot comprising five acres. It fronts on the west side of Broadway and slopes down towards the Hudson River. A large swimming pool is in the rear of the house, both being of the most dazzling whiteness against the background of heavy trees that cover the slope down to the river's edge.

$100,000 in Furnishings

More than $100,000 was spent in furnishings, which included massive period furniture, gorgeous tapestries, a built-in pipe organ said to have cost $25,000 and a piano costing $12,000. Other expensive furnishings included rare china and silverware for the dining room, and an extensive library.

But Mme Walker had little enjoyment in her mansion, for she died in 1919, shortly after it was finished. Her daughter, A'Lelia Walker, seldom lived in it, making her home in the Walker building at 108 West 136th street, headquarters of the New York branch of the business and at 80 Edgecombe avenue. It was used occasionally for weekend parties and sightseeing trips. With the death of the daughter last year, the property passed to the grand-daughter, Mrs. Mae Walker Perry of Indianapolis, the present head of the company.

The decision to dispose of the property was reached before A'Lelia Walker died and was followed by the sale of the furnishings at a public auction, the sale bringing $58,500 in November, 1930. In May, 1931, the building was put up at auction, but failing to attract satisfactory bids, it was bought in by F. B. Ransom, manager of the company, for the estate, at $60,000.

CONTEST SALE OF LEWARO

NEW YORK, Apr. 7.—(ANP)—Villa Lewaro, the magnificent home at Irvinton-on-the-Hudson, built for herself by the late Mme. C. J. Walker, may or may not be a white elephant, but the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is going to protect any rights which it may have in the property.

It is claimed that the palatial estate was left by Mme. Walker to her daughter, the late A'Lelia Walker, and that it was stipulated that at her death it was to go to the Association. The Association thus contends that the trustees of the estate have no legal right to sell it, and an action has been brought by Louis Isquith, real estate man, against F. B. Ransom, F. R. De Frantz and Robert L. Brokenburr, trustees, to compel them to fulfill a contract which he alleges they entered into with him last August to sell the property for $60,000.

The [illegible] was entered at White Plains before Supreme Court Justice William F. Bleakley, who will render a decision later.

Villa Leware Sold To Fraternal Body

—Housekeeper Made Heiress to Rich Man's Estate

Mrs. Annie C. DeWitt to Share Residue With Another Employee

NEW YORK, Mar. 3.—Villa Lewaro, palatial home at Irvington-on-the-Hudson of the late Mme. C. J. Walker, founder of the company bearing her name, has been purchased by the Companions of the Forest of America, a national non-sectarian fraternal organization, and will be turned into a haven for tired mothers and their dependents.

Report of the purchase was confirmed by Mrs. Annie Poth in charge of the organization in this district, and is reported to have a membership of more than 400,000, of which nearly half are in the Metropolitan district.

Mrs. Poth said that her group has already taken title to the property, which comprises five acres and a twenty-four room mansion fronting on the Hudson. Alterations will be started shortly, with a view to opening the retreat for members about June 1, she said. A number of bungalows are to be constructed on the property for the housing of individual families. Convalescents will be cared for and needy working mothers will be offered several weeks outing each year with nursing care, according to the plans of the Companions of the Forest.

Villa Lewaro was completed about thirteen years ago by Mme. Walker, who died in 1919, after having occupied it only a short time, then it was left to her late daughter, Alelia, who also died suddenly last year while on a visit to the New Jersey coast. She was reported to have spent about $400,000 on the house and its elaborate furnishings and grounds, located in the heart of a fashionable residential section. The fittings included a $25,000 built-in pipe organ and an extensive library Villa Lewaro was the scene of many social gatherings.

The furnishings were sold at auction in November, 1930, for an aggregate price said to have been in excess of $50,000, but when the home itself was offered in May, 1931, it failed to attract many bidders. It was bid in at $60,000 by F. B. Ramson, trustee for the Walker estate, who said at that time that it would be turned into a Negro Art Colony.

As a reward for her faihful service to Jeremiah Joseph Kennedy, white, who died February 15, 1932, at his home at 529 Second street, Brooklyn, Mrs. Annie Catharine DeWitt, housekeeper at the same address, will benefit by receiving half of the residue of his estate, which amounts to more than $40,000.

The will, which was made out on October 30, 1916, was filed in the Surrogate's Court in Brooklyn on Monday, March 7. Under the terms of the will the wife of the deceased was left only $100 and her dower rights, while bequests made to other relatives amounted in all to $900.

Bequests to Others

Other bequests were made to Dr. Clark Burnham, $5,000; Annie C. Thomas, $5,000; Philip Gluckman, chauffeur, $1,500; Jessie Spinner, employee, $1000; John J. Nolan, $250; Little Sisters of Poor of Philadelphia, Pa., $1,000; Home for the Aged, Little Sisters of Poor, Brooklyn, N. Y., $1,000.

Cared For His Mother

And according to the will: "All the rest, residue and remainder of my property, real and personal and of whatsoever nature and wheresoever situated, including any and all bequests heremibefore made, or as the result of any other cause or causes, I give, devise and bequeat, equally, share and share alike, absolutely and forever to Gertrude McBride, now residing at 24 South Walnut street, in the City of East Orange, State of New Jersey, and employed by me continuously since October, 1901 at 52 Broadway, New York City, and to Annie Catherine DeWitt, who has been in my employ since January, 1894.

I am deeply grateful to Annie Catherine DeWitt for her devotion and kindness to my mother and myself for many years, and particularly for her tender care of my mother which to a large extent, alleviated my mother's suffering during the last years of her life."

It was stipulated in the will that should either of the two predecease him, the entire residue was to go to the remaining party.

While no estimate could be obtained of the amount or value of the property it was said that the entire amount would far exceed the estimate given the Surrogate of over $20,000 real, and over $20,000 personal.

ATTORNEYS LAUNCH COURT AFFRAY FOR FABULOUS "RICHES"

Ossining Resident, Whose Husband Holds Post as Deputy Sheriff, Files Papers to Prove Right to Huge Estate

While prospective heirs from the center of Europe and all parts of America flocked here Friday to begin their fights to inherit the $100,000,000 Wendel fortune, which was willed to charity at the death of an aged white recluse last March, attorneys for a 59-year-old Negro woman filed a claim which may eventually make their client one of the richest women in the world.

This latest claimant, Mrs. Blanche Wendel Hoffman, 25 Hunter street, Ossining, a member of St. Phillip's Episcopal Church here at 216 West 134th street, and a resident of this city for more than twenty years, declares that she is the great granddaughter of Johann Gottlieb Matthias Wendel, founder of the fortune for which more than a score of "heirs" will battle. It is believed that the woman has one of the most direct claims in the group.

Tracing her descent back to a romance in 1798 between the founder of the fortune and Violet Wal Shinnecock, Mrs. Hoffman's great grandmother and the daughter of the chief of a tribe of Indians on Long Island, the woman filed her claim in behalf of herself, a sister, two brothers and five first cousins. She is seeking a share of the principal of the fortune with interest and compound interest.

The names of the other claimants mentioned in her plea have not been revealed.

Interviewed by The Amsterdam News at her Ossining home, Mrs. Hoffman, who is the wife of Deputy Sheriff John W. Hoffman of White Plains, was quite frank in the discussion of her claim. She stated that she had always known of her relationship to the Wendels, even when the eccentric sisters were living.

Until her marriage, 36 years ago, she lived at 148 West Thirty-second street. She resided at that address for more than twenty years. During this time, she became a member of St. Phillip's Episcopal Church. After her marriage she moved to Ossining. She refused to reveal the name of the attorneys who are representing her in the case—stating that they could better represent her if unhampered in their duties.

According to Mrs. Hoffman's contention, Johann Gottlieb Wendel came to America in 1798, and fell in love with the Indian chieftain's daughter. Whether they were married or even accorded the tribal rites is not known, but the princess and her two brothers, Joe Bear Wal and Buck Skin Wal are said to have accompanied Wendel on his trapping expeditions up and down the Hudson River.

A child was born to the union in Schenectady. This child, a boy, was called John Wendel. Mrs. Hoffman asserts that he was her grandfather and a half brother of the late John Daniel Wendel, father of Miss Ella Wendel, last custodian of the fortune founded by the fur trapper. John Wendel, the half-Indian, is said to have had ten children, all of whom are dead now.

Four of these children, Mrs. Hoffman contends, were named Ella, Mary, Eliza and John. Similar names wer borne by members of the recognized branch of the family. One of the ten children, John G. Wendel, is claimed by Mrs. Hoffman as her father.

Deeds on file in Schenectady, the claimant contends, show that her grandfather, John Wendel, was the recipient of several pieces of land from an unnamed person. Her attorneys are working to prove that the parcels of land were given to the half-Indian by John Gottlieb Wendel.

The will of Miss Ella von E. Wendel, eccentric spinister who left one of the world's largest fortunes to charities and foreign divinity schools at her death last March, was scheduled to be probated Monday. When nearly fifty attorneys gathered there to represent "heirs" who are seeking the fortune, they were told to return on March 14, when two citations made by temporary administrators of the estate will be heard.

The other claimants, all of whom are white, include Rosa Dew Stansbury of Vicksburg, Miss.; Amelia Holchmacher of Glendale, Queens; Andreas Wendel and Richard Wendel Sturm of Bremen, Germany. All of the claimants admit fifth and sixth degree relationship to Miss Ella Wendel. One of the citations listed by the temporary administrators lists more than 2,000 claimants, but attorneys state that this is a "romantic" document and that its length is due to an "excess of caution."

Property - 1932

VILLA LEWARO SOLD AT LAST; BRINGS $47,500

Debts On Property Had Accumulated Greatly

NEW YORK CITY—(CNS)—Forty-seven thousand, five hundred dollars was all any purchaser would pay for the Madame Walker mansion, "Villa Lewaro," Mrs. Annie Poth, 270 West 125th Street, national secretary of the Companions of the Forest of America, acting on behalf of her organization of 450,000 members, agreed to pay the $47,500 the amount of the indebtedness on the property.

Justice Witschief in Supreme Court at White Plains approved an application by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to sell the $250,000 eight-acre estate at Irvington-on-Hudson left to the Association by the will of Madame C. J. Walker.

The property was willed by the late Madame Walker to her daughter, the late A'Lelia Walker Kennedy, and provision was made in the will that in the event of the latter's death the property was to go to the N. A. A. C. P. under certain conditions.

Debts on the property accumulated to such an extent that when the trustees asked the N. A. A. C. P. if it would take over the property with its indebtedness the Association declined.

VILLA LEWARO WAS DEBT FREE

Money Paid for Property in Deal Due Company Manager Says

Villa Lewaro, the $50,000 Georgian mansion of the late Madame C. J. Walker, Irvington-On-Hudson, N.Y., changed owneship last spring when $47,500 was paid for the property by the Forest of America company at a private sale following the death of Madam Walker's daughter, Mrs. A'Lelia Walker Kennedy.

According to Attorney F. B. Ransom, general manager of the Mme C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company, the sum of $47,500 paid for the Villa Lawaro property simply liquidated an indebetness to the Walker company. Nothing was owed by the company on the palce at the time of the sale as stated in a previous Capital News Service dispatch.

Recent press dispatches contained the allegedly erroneous statement that the $47,000 paid for the property was owed on the place at the time of the sale.

VILLA LEWARO Ante-American NATIONAL HOME OF FORESTERS

IRVINGTON-ON-HUDSON, N.Y. The $250,000 Villa Lewaro, Georgian mansion of the late Mme. C. J. Walker, will be opened with receptions on September 4 and 5 as the national home of the Companions of the Forest of America, (white).

Mrs. Annie E. Poth, supreme financial secretary of the organization, who bought the Walker estate last spring for her companions, de-

Property - 1932

SETTLE $100,000 ESTATE

Courier
6-18-32
Pittsborough

WARRENTON, N. C., June 16—The will of Byron Brown, wealthiest Negro in Warren county, was sustained by a Warren county jury Thursday afternoon after deliberation of around three hours.

The caveators upon receipt of the verdict noted an appeal to the Supreme Court.

An estate valued at more than $100,000 is involved.

The case, tried at the May term of court last year and resulting in a mistrial when a jury was unable to agree after deliberating for more than 20 hours, was hard fought with the defense represented by Julius Banzet of Warrenton, Geo. Green of Weldon, Bennett Perry and Bob Kittrell of Henderson and the plaintiffs represented by Kerr and Kerr of Warrenton and Yarborough and Yarborough of Louisburg.

Greensboro, N. C. News
Saturday, December 24, 1932

105 Aged Negroes Receive Gifts From Money Left By Member of Their Race

(Special to Daily News)

Fayetteville, Dec. 23.—A hundred and five aged negroes gathered here today to receive "Chris'mus giffs" from the Christmas fund which grew out of the will of an humble negro draymen who died here 10 years ago and left all he owned to a millionaire white friend. The James McAllister Christmas fund was distributed at 3 o'clock this afternoon at the Huske building on Hay street to the men and women on the list of recipients by the trustees of the fund established in 1926 by Williamson W. Fuller, native of Fayetteville, now a retired lawyer of New York and Pinehurst.

Jim McAllister drove an old time dray on the streets of Fayetteville and amassed a small competence. His white people were the McAllister's of the old Bluff church neighborhood, but his wife was a servant of the Fuller family, and he knew "Mr. Willie" from the time they were both boys. When he died, his will, signed with his cross mark, bequeathed all his property, real and personal, to "Mr. Willie." The principal item of the estate was Jim's little home on Franklin street. This appreciated in value as time went by, and Mr. Fuller had the money converted into stock and set the latter aside as a trust fund to be used for the giving of gifts to aged negroes of Cross Creek township at the holiday season. This has been done now for six years, and is always one of the high spots of Christmas week in Fayetteville.

The fund this year amounted to $685.

Property – 1932

$250,000 GIVEN BY COURT TO COUPLE

Raymond Jackson Case Is Finally Settled

4-30-32

MUSKOGEE, Okla.—The famous Raymond Jackson case has been decided, with the courts ruling that the parents of Jackson be given a quarter of a million dollars in oil royalties. Norfolk, Va.

More than ten years ago, a nation-wide search was made for Raymond Jackson, who was mysteriously missing. Land which he had inherited had developed oil and he was fabulously rich. He could not be found.

In 1923, the parents of Jackson claimed and buried a body which they said was that of their son, killed in an Arkansas train wreck. In the meantime, several persons, estimated to be 19 in all, claiming to be the missing heir, turned up. Suits were filed by many of these, claiming the inheritance. As a result several were placed in prison for perjury.

Judge R. L. Williams, of the United States district court, last week handed down his decision, turning over to the Rev. and Mrs. Davis Jackson, parents of the missing youth, $250,000, accrued oil royalties on the property, which is said to be worth five million dollars.

The land is leased by the Carter Oil Company. The decision in the case closes a long drawn legal battle in the courts, with future indictments threatened against several of the fictitious Raymond Jacksons.

$250,000 AWARDED TO OKLA. COUPLE

MUSKOGEE, Okla.— (ANP) — Judge R. L. Williams in United States district court here last Monday decided that the famous Raymond Jackson who was reputed to be the owner of $250,000 in impounded oil royalties, is dead.

Jackson was killed in a railroad accident in Arkansas in 1923, Judge Williams ruled.

He further held that the parents of the dead Raymond Jackson are entitled to the impounded royalties now held by the Carter Oil Company.

At least fifteen indictments are expected to follow Judge Williams's decision against nearly a score of men in different states who have tried to prove that they are the original Raymond Jackson.

Property – 1932

FEAR BANKS LOSES $14,000

Savings Were Kept in Barbershop Safe

Florence, S. C., Feb. 1—Robbers early today entered a colored barber shop here and carted off a safe containing approximately $14,000 the savings of a large number of persons made fearful of banks because of recent closings.

Walter Lide, proprietor of the shop, told police he had allowed residents of the community to place their surplus cash in his safe.

Police said a truck was driven to the front door and used to carry the safe away.

Property - 1932

Chattanooga, Tenn.
TIMES

JUN 4 1932

PROPERTY-HOLDING EMPLOYES.

Recently compiled figures relative to the ownership of city real estate by municipal employes reveal two rather surprising facts. One is that not nearly one-half of the employes in the four main classes surveyed are property owners; the other is the fact that the largest proportion of property owners is to be found among Negro teachers.

Of 180 firemen, only seventy-four, or 41 per cent., are owners of real estate in Chattanooga. Of the city's 120 policemen, only forty-eight, or 40 per cent., are property owners. Of the 600 white teachers in the city schools, only 170, or 28 per cent., own real estate. Of the 200 colored teachers, 116, or 58 per cent., own their homes or other property in the city.

Information as to the causes of the great differences in the property-holding percentages of these four classes would be very interesting, and it might be of some value to city officials as well as to the students of such matters. No doubt it would be easy to explain, for instance, why 58 per cent. of the Negro teachers own property, while only 28 per cent. of the white teachers are paying real estate taxes.

But no matter what the explanation may be, the record of the Negro teachers for thrift reflects credit upon them. Comparatively few members of their race have economic opportunities comparable to those enjoyed by most white persons. And when a class of colored employes makes such a showing in the accumulation of property as that made by the Negro teachers of this city, they are displaying a quality of citizenship and economic practices deserving of commendation.

Chattanooga, Tenn.
NEWS

JUL 15 1932

Home Owners

MORE Knoxvillians own their homes than do Chattanoogans. This is a distinction for our neighboring city which Chattanooga should strive to overcome in future years. In Knoxville, 40.6 per cent of the people are home-owners. In Chattanooga, the percentage is only 33 per cent. The figures are official, being based on the 1930 United States census.

We suspect that the reason for the difference is that in Knoxville the proportion of Negro families, compared to the whole population, is 17.1 per cent, while in Chattanooga it is 30.3 per cent.

In the entire State, 45 per cent of the people own their homes, this being due to the large farm population.

Without starting an argument with Knoxville, we think the Chattanooga record in home-owning somewhat low. Certainly there has been no better time within years to buy homes or to repair those already built.

West Virginia.
8

Property-1932

TIMES
Wheeling W. Va.

DEC 21 1932

COLORED MAN'S THRIFT

A colored barber who died in Martinsburg, W. Va., recently left an estate valued at about $44.000, accumulated savings of about forty years' work and thrift in that city. This demonstrates that it is possible for a colored man to accumulate a considerable amount of wealth although it must be admitted that members of the Negro race operate under difficulties in the business world which the white man is not required to undergo.

One of the leading Negro educators in West Virginia at an employment meeting at Charleston some weeks ago called attention to the fact that when business depression comes on, the Negro is the first person to be discharged from employment and the last man to be taken back when better times are restored.

That is a condition which should not exist, of course but nevertheless it is apparently more or less a fact. The time will come, however, when a man's business success will depend more on his ability and perservance than on the color of his skin or his nationality